

**Letter to Congressional Leaders on
Continuation of the National
Emergency With Respect to the
Taliban**

June 30, 2000

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice to the *Federal Register* for publication, stating that the emergency declared with respect to the Taliban is to continue in effect beyond July 5, 2000.

On July 4, 1999, I issued Executive Order 13129, "Blocking Property and Prohibiting Transactions with the Taliban," to deal with the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States posed by the actions and policies of the Taliban in Afghanistan. The order blocks all property and interests in property of the Taliban and prohibits trade-related transactions by United States persons involving the territory of Afghanistan controlled by the Taliban.

The Taliban continues to allow territory under its control in Afghanistan to be used as a safe haven and base of operations for Usama bin Laden and the Al-Qaida organization, who have committed and threaten to continue to commit acts of violence against the United States and its nationals. This situation continues to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy interests of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to maintain in force these emergency authorities beyond July 5, 2000.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. This

item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

The President's Internet Address

July 1, 2000

Good afternoon. Two hundred and thirteen years ago, about a hundred feet from where I'm sitting now, in a summer as sweltering as this one, the Founding Fathers drafted the Constitution of the United States. In the very first article of that doctrine, they wrote that Government shall make no law, quote, "impairing the obligation of contracts."

James Madison called this contract clause "a constitutional bulwark in favor of personal security and private rights." He and his fellow framers understood that the right of individuals to enter into commercial contracts was fundamental, not just for economic growth but for the preservation of liberty itself.

Yesterday I had the privilege of signing into law legislation that carries the spirit of the Founders' wisdom into the information age. The Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce Act, which passed with overwhelming support from both parties in both Houses, will open up new frontiers of economic opportunity while protecting the rights of America's consumers.

This new law will give fresh momentum to what is already the longest economic expansion in our history, an expansion driven largely by the phenomenal growth in information technologies, particularly the Internet, with its almost unlimited potential to expand our opportunities and broaden our horizons.

Yet that potential is now being held back, ironically, by old laws written to protect the sanctity of contracts, laws that require pen and ink signatures on paper documents for contracts to be enforceable.

Under this landmark new legislation, online contracts will now have the same legal force as equivalent paper ones. Companies will have the legal certainty they need to invest and expand in electronic commerce. They will be able not only to purchase products and services on-line but to contract to do so. And they could potentially save billions

of dollars by sending and retaining monthly statements and other records in electronic form. Eventually, vast warehouses of paper will be replaced by servers the size of VCR's.

Customers will soon enjoy a whole new universe of on-line services. With the swipe of a smart card and the click of a mouse, they will be able to finalize mortgages, sign insurance contracts, or open brokerage accounts.

Just as importantly, the law affords consumers who contract on-line the same kinds of protections and records, such as financial disclosures, they currently receive when they sign paper contracts. Consumers will be able to choose whether to do business and receive records on paper or on-line. They will have the power to decide if they want to receive notices and disclosures electronically. It will not be their responsibility but the company's to ensure that the data sent to a consumer can be read on the consumer's computer. No more E-mail attachments with gibberish inside.

Finally, government agencies will have the authority to enforce the laws, protect the public interest, and carry out their missions in the electronic world.

For 8 years now, I have set forth a new vision of government and politics, one that marries our most enduring values to the demands of the new information age. In many ways, the Electronic Signatures Act exemplifies that vision. It shows what we in Washington can accomplish when we put progress above partisanship, cross party lines, think of the future, and work together for the American people.

Thank you, and happy Independence Day.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 10:35 a.m. on June 30 at Independence National Historical Park in Philadelphia, PA, for broadcast at 10 a.m. on July 1. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 30 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. S. 761, the Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce Act, approved June 30, was assigned Public Law No. 106-229.

The President's Radio Address

July 1, 2000

Good morning. Millions of Americans will hit the highway this weekend to join their families in celebrating the birth of our Nation and the independence we enjoy. While our Nation has never been stronger or more prosperous, we must do more to free working families from the grip of rising energy costs, especially the price we pay at the pump.

We're all feeling the effects of higher gas prices. That's why our administration is taking action to meet America's energy needs in both the short and long term. Right now the Federal Trade Commission is conducting an investigation to determine if oil companies are engaging in illegal gasoline pricing practices.

In the 2 weeks since the investigation began, prices have fallen 8 cents a gallon at the pump in the Midwest and more than 12 cents a gallon at the pump in the Chicago region. We're also continuing to work with foreign countries to close the gap between oil production and consumption. While that's good news, we still have more to do to strengthen our security over the long term. That's the most important thing.

Over the last 7 years, with the Vice President's leadership, our administration has pursued a forward-looking and balanced strategy that increases both our energy supply and our energy efficiency, saving consumers money and preparing for unexpected energy shortages in the future. For example, we've invested in new technologies to more efficiently develop our domestic oil reserves and to promote wind, solar, and other alternative sources of energy. My budget this year includes several other measures to further enhance our energy security.

Unfortunately, the Republican Congress has failed to act on key elements of our strategy to meet America's energy needs in the 21st century. They want to revert to an old 19th century approach that endangers our environment instead of one that invests in the future.